

**DIFFERENT HOUSEHOLD FORMATION SYSTEMS IN ONE  
COUNTRY AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY:  
VARIATIONS ON JOHN HAJNAL'S THESIS<sup>1</sup>**

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INTRODUCTION

Demography is a branch of the social sciences particularly well suited for the use of models, perhaps because a main feature of demographic research is the search for empirical regularities, where events and entities are presented in an unambiguously numerical form (Coale and Trussel 1996). However, the quality of the established model depends on how thoroughly the empirical research has been exploited for model building and how suitable the model is for later practical application.

Having devoted a long time to the study of family and household structures, we often find ourselves in an ambiguous situation. Browsing among the relevant case studies we often come upon brilliant pieces of writing which allow us to glimpse the previously almost unimaginable depths of pre-industrial family relations or individual life-cycles. However, the limitations of the knowledge offered by these studies have also been obvious for a long time. The case studies which have become known in the last two to three decades seem valid mainly for a certain community, a few dozen square kilometres or a unit of a few hundred families, and even for these they only cover a shorter rather than a longer period. The representational nature of such studies is often questionable – we cannot really describe the demographic characteristics and processes of a larger region on the basis of them.

When we turn to the theoretically oriented macro studies (of different household formation models) we frequently find that they lack thorough analysis and a solid database – their arguments are too often based on scattered and contradictory evidence. On the other hand, these theories and models usually have great interpretative force and can lead to interesting conclusions.

<sup>1</sup>This is the extended version of a paper presented at the conference 'The Population of the Carpathian Basin at the Millennium,' on November 9<sup>th</sup> 2000. Its first version was given at the 23<sup>rd</sup> conference of IUSSP in Beijing, China, October 1997 and then it was published in English in *Historical Social Research* 1998 No. 1–2. The present version is a considerably revised text compared to the original English, with an extended bibliography also containing recently published materials on the question.

We have found that research based on macro data and incorporating its results into a model to be the type which takes us closest to understanding past societies: thus this is a path worth following. However, research by demographers modelling present-day families and households has already proved that this is not very easy to put into practice. Although their analyses are built on large masses of easily accessible data (the researcher dealing with the present is able to access data for his/her model which is unimaginably rich in comparison with the work of the historical demographer), they contain several simplifications and yet still appear rather complicated. In creating his model for the contemporary household and family, J. Bongaarts lists six demographic factors that determine the composition of nuclear families (marriage, fertility, adoption, mortality, migration, divorce) and four more factors that determine how nuclear families and the remaining individuals in the population combine to form households (headship prevalence, household formation, transition and dissolution) (Bongaarts, Burch and Wachter 1990). Perhaps it is needless to say that the author concentrated only on the demographic aspect of the household and family formation complex, while omitting the relationships between household characteristics and socio-economic, cultural, psychological, and kinship factors from the list. The latter were also not included among factors examined or applied in other research on the present (Kuijsten and Vossen 1988). We must add that this refers to modern nuclear families which are usually small, simply structured and fulfil a limited number of functions. The families and households of pre-industrial times, both in their structure and in their functions, were much more complicated. Besides serving as crucial units from a demographic point of view, they also served as the basis of social organisation: they were domestic, family and kin groups, cultural (sometimes even military and religious) entities and also micro-economic units producing goods and services at the same place and at the same time.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to historical models of marriage, family and the household. First of all, as we have indicated above, researchers in this field can rely on a much poorer database which is more fragmented in terms of time and place of reference. What is worse, it is not usually possible to extend and transform this database in accordance with scholarly needs – the survival and data content of historical sources has to be considered more or less arbitrary from the point of view of the present. Besides, as we have also indicated, families and households in the past have functioned through a far more versatile complex of roles than their present successors; in other words, a more impoverished set of sources should enable us to analyse and model a far richer set of phenomena and structures. The challenge of the task is, naturally, also a source of inspiration to some extent, therefore attempts towards a theoretical and methodological approach to the problem have been launched more or less simultaneously with the historical research into families and households.

In the elaboration of historical household, family and marriage models, two traditions can be clearly identified. *John Hajnal* (1965, 1982) starts from the tradition of demographic theories and contemporary demographic analyses. He ascertains regularities on the basis of aggregated data, distinguishes between regions and makes world-scale generalisations. Representatives of the Cambridge School, *Peter Laslett* (1972, 1977, 1983) – and *Richard Wall* (1983, 1995), in their turn represent the rational tradition of European historical demography deeply oriented towards the search for empirical regularities. They are chiefly interested in those traits of families, households and marriages which can be deduced from case-study type empirical examinations (or are suitable to follow up on those) and if possible, try to avoid (particularly Wall) those vague generalisations which overarch large periods or territories. At the same time, they also try to include in their model (or, as they have cautiously called it, ‘set of characteristics’ or ‘criteria’) some factors which are not directly demographic (such as kinship, labour organization or welfare functions). All their proposals, and they have quite a few, appear in the form of simple statistics, proportions and ratios, rather than declaring unequivocal and clearly understandable rules. Thus, it is no accident that Hajnal’s statements, which appear in plain, clearly formulated rules and indicate a wider scope for generalisation, provoked broader interest among the researchers even beyond the boundaries of historical demographic research. The writings of *Peter Laslett* and *Richard Wall*<sup>2</sup> only attracted serious attention among historical demographers interested in families and households. In what follows we too intend to concentrate on John Hajnal’s theory of households and marriages, although it will occasionally be inevitable that we include some statements by the Cambridge School connected to the work of Hajnal.

#### HAJNAL AND HIS CRITICS

Almost forty years ago John Hajnal published his famous and ground-breaking paper on European marriage patterns (Hajnal 1965). His second major contribution to the topic was the ‘Two basic types of the pre-industrial household formation system’ (henceforth to be referred to as ‘System’) first published in

<sup>2</sup> The present statement, however, cannot be considered valid for Peter Laslett’s other writings. The author’s books and papers on pre-industrial English society, or on the unique character of the nuclear family in Western Europe and its role in industrialisation and social welfare (Laslett 1976, 1984, 1988a, 1988b) and the related conclusions regarding economic and social history provoked vigorous debates among social historians (see Seccombe 1992).

1982<sup>3</sup>. The author regarded this paper as the sequel to the previous one so we shall also consider the two essays together as two pieces of one coherent theory. In the introduction to the 'System' *John Hajnal* clearly declares the aim of his paper: 'to compare modes of behaviour that result in the formation of households of various kinds, as well as to compare the results of that behaviour' ('System', p. 449). He also clearly described his limits. He would only treat seventeenth and eighteenth century Western European and the comparable Asiatic regions in their pre-industrial phases because at that time not enough relevant published household data for other territories like Southern Europe or Finland existed. Furthermore, he emphasised data covering populations of 5000 or more instead of data from small individual communities. He excluded stem family formations (not really justifying why) and also urban household systems. He was nearly always cautious in his conclusions and emphasized several times that 'there are other kinds of household formation systems besides the two considered here'. Hajnal also declared that some things were missing from his set of rules, e.g. he did not describe the regularities regarding individuals detaching themselves from the household, nor those regarding the dissolution of households.

His basic statements, the famous household formation rules, can be summarised as follows ('System', p. 452). Two main systems of household formation are observable in these parts of the world he had examined:

I. Simple family household system.

Basic regularities are:

1. late marriage (over 26 for men and over 23 for women);
2. neo-locality (immediately after the marriage the newly-wed establish an independent household);
3. before marriage young people frequently circulate between households as servants.

II. Joint family household system.

Main characteristics are

1. early marriage (mean ages at first marriage are usually under 26 for men and 21 for women);

<sup>3</sup>The much better known and more frequently cited paper which *Hajnal* published under the same title in the volume of collected essays 'Family forms in historic Europe' one year later, in 1983, was an abridged version of the former text. Several important, highly stimulating and highly provocative findings were left out of the second version. It is a regrettable fact that while some of the authors are sharply criticizing the original essay, the majority of historical demographers are acquainted primarily with the second, abridged version.

2. after the wedding the new couple stay in the household of the parents of one of them (no new, independent household is established)<sup>4</sup>
3. new households formed only through fission (splitting) or inheritance after the death of the head of the household.

In connection with discrimination between these two types, the author considered the question of service and the employment of servants crucial and thus formulated this question more precisely and in more detail further on ('system' p. 473). In his opinion the characteristics of service as an institution in the rural populations of pre-industrial Northwest Europe can be described using the criteria below:

- a) the proportion of servants in the population is high, at least 6%, but usually over 10%;
- b) servants are unmarried;
- c) service is a transitory life position which the majority of country people enter at an early age, (before marriage) (life cycle service);
- d) beyond domestic and personal services the servants form an integral part of the farm labour force;
- e) servants are hired for a limited period on a contractual base;
- f) servants live as members of the master's household;
- g) servants are not socially inferior to the master in their status (both they and their masters consider service a transitional state).

Hajnal supposed that the two household systems resulted in different internal relationships in the family<sup>5</sup> and they reacted in a fundamentally dissimilar fashion to difficulties resulting from economic problems and/or population pressure. Joint family households, for example, were able to absorb unemployment arising for the above reasons (population surplus), while similarly, the small households of North-West Europe increased the proportion of young adults in service and delayed their marriage. 'It was probably because of the service that Northwest Europe could operate with a balance between birth and death rates established at a lower level than prevailed in other pre-industrial societies ... populations with a joint household systems lacking that mechanism' ('System' pp. 478, 481). *John*

<sup>4</sup> In practice most young couples start their new life with the parents of the young husband: to use a phrase borrowed from anthropology, the choice of residence after marriage is patrilocal. (Author's note. *Hajnal* does not cover this question.)

<sup>5</sup> In the joint household 'the young husband's parents will often be in charge of the household. The young wife comes under the authority of her mother-in-law at an age at which, in Northwest Europe, she would often have been in service under an unrelated mistress. Her husband may continue to have a closer relationship with his mother, who is present in the household, than with his wife'. ('system' pp. 475.)

*Hajnal* perceptively avoided specifying clearly the regional consequences of his rules but *Peter Laslett*, following in his wake, was not as cautious. 'Western familial tendencies may themselves have disposed towards factory industrialization ... [but] the Japanese, the Russians, or even the Italians and the Poles, in so far as they adopted industrialism as a way of life, may not be in the same position in respect of the industrial culture as the West Europeans themselves ... neolocal tendencies were never part and parcel of the historical social structure of these societies as they have been for the West Europeans (Laslett 1983, 559).

In his study on marriage patterns, which constitutes the first half of his work (Hajnal 1965), *Hajnal* actually cut Europe in half with a line stretching from Trieste to Leningrad (St. Petersburg) on the basis of 1900 demographic data – this line has become deeply engraved into the consciousness of demographers and social historians since that time. The name *Hajnal* gave to his pattern has also been passed on – authors still keep referring to the 'North-Western European model' as a 'European pattern,' overlooking the fact that by doing so they more or less unconsciously exclude the societies of the peripheries (increasingly only the Eastern peripheries) from Europe.

As is customary with programmatic texts, *Hajnal's* two writings caused a profound cleft between readers, and thus generated believers and opponents. There have been few analyses on marriage, family or the household since the 1960's that leave *Hajnal's* writings unmentioned. Reactions to his statements can be divided into four groups – some authors accept them fully, others accept them with some reservation, some disapprove and others remain silent. It is not necessary to talk about those in agreement with Hajnal in much detail. Most of these authors produce case studies on Western societies based on limited source material in space and time. Samples from the other groups, however, deserve some attention.

Let us start with those who accept *Hajnal's* views with certain limitations. Some authors – first of all those who worked on the peripheral societies of Western Europe or were interested in the historical demography of non-European people – had compatibility problems regarding the direct use of *Hajnal's* data, so they tried to supplement or slightly modify his statements.

*Daniel Kertzer* and *Dennis Hogan* (1991), while expressing their appreciation of the works of *John Hajnal* and *Peter Laslett*, proposed modifications on the Mediterranean marriage pattern model of the latter author and declared their doubts regarding any simple connection between the structure or type of families and households and age at marriage. According to *Francesco Benigno* (1989), in pre-industrial Italy and Spain there were at least three marriage models<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Benigno refers in this respect to the writings of M. Barbagli ('sistemi di formazione della famiglia in Italia', *Boletín de la Asociación de Demografía Histórica* 5 (1987): 80–127) and R. Rowland ('systemas matrimoniales en la península Ibérica (siglos XVI–XX.: una

functioning, and he could not find any association between early marriages and the formation of the nuclear family household. He thinks we ought to attribute more importance to economic, social, and other demographic factors not directly linked to the family. 'Both marriage and household patterns express the links between the economy and demography, and systems of production and social reproduction ... these links set limits and established tendencies, but ... the variability of the types of domestic organization and the demographic values strictly linked to them depend on different cultural modes, on diverse ideas of the family and its social role, and upon individual and family choices' (Benigno 1989, p. 185).

*Katherine A. Lynch* (1991) has noted that although *John Hajnal* concentrated on rural populations, the European marriage pattern is not in conflict with the social and demographic structures of European cities and towns over the long term adding two modifications to the model: (1) that 'various social groups within urban settings used the two parts of the European Marriage Pattern with different levels of intensity and commitment' and (2) that 'urban dwellers' practice of marriage was constrained not only by the mores and beliefs of their own social group but also by the kind of urban economies in which they lived' (Lynch 1991, p. 91).

A third group of readers, usually not historical demographers, were sharper in their critiques. *Wally Seccombe* (1992, p. 186) thought it was misleading to refer to the late marriage as a rule or custom, and he believed that out of the three rules declared by *John Hajnal* 'only the second pattern' can be 'normatively upheld'.<sup>7</sup> However the greater part of his criticism turned against Peter Laslett's interpretations and the uniqueness of the Western European family model. Anthropologist *Jack Goody* has been ever harsher on *Hajnal*. He declared *Hajnal's* model and the uniqueness of Western European society and household structure, as claimed by the Cambridge school, to be only another form of myth-making just as the other elements of *Hajnal's* rules and the conclusions drawn from them: the importance of service, the existence of institutional care for old poor people, and the ability to keep a balance between birth and death rates. He felt that the general contrast between Northwestern Europe and the Asian societies was not valid ('or if valid, not so important'). According to Goody, *Hajnal* 'over-stresses the actual differences', 'the data do not altogether justify such a sharp dichotomy' and 'it is not clear how these differences, real or supposed, inhibited or advanced the development of capitalism, industrialization, or modernization' which are central themes

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perspectiva regional', v. Perez Moreda and D.S. Reher eds. *Demografía histórica de España* (Madrid 1987).)

<sup>7</sup>According to Seccombe's interpretation 'a couple in charge of their own household after marriage' (Seccombe 1992, pp. 294).

behind the theory of the dominance of the nuclear family household (Goody 1996, pp. 14, 17).<sup>8</sup>

The grandiose summary of family history research in France (Burguière 1996) did not state its criticism so sharply but in our opinion the French historical demographers went even further, concluding that instead of retaining *Hajnal's* two and *Laslett's* four models, it would be more profitable to return to the three basic models defined by *Le Play* in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century: the nuclear, the communitarian and the stem family (Burguière 1986, p. 46)<sup>9</sup>. According to *André Burguière* and *Francois Lebrun*, on a European scale it would seem more useful to distinguish between forms of family organization by their cultural peculiarities rather than their geographical location (or, to 'translate' the meaning of the authors, it is not useful to try to divide family types by rigid geographic boundaries). This is also essentially the attitude followed by the relevant chapters of the four-volume French work on population history (Fauve-Chamoux 1988; Segalen 1988).

Finally there was a particular and very silent form of reaction. It was interesting and thought-provoking during our survey of the literature to see that an important group of the authors, professional demographers dealing with the modelling of the present day households, showed nearly complete ignorance of the *Hajnal* theses and the debates they have generated (Burch and Matthews 1987; Keilman, Kuijsten and Vossen 1988; Bongaarts, Burch and Wachter 1990; Burch 1995). Such an experience involuntarily reinforces the impression on the reader that co-operation between the researchers of the past and the present is still well below the desirable level.

If we survey the literature devoted to (publicising, debating or using) *John Hajnal's* theses in a chronological order, we find while up until the end of the 1980's or early 1990's the characteristic approach was a critical tone, from the first half of the 90's the emphasis began to shift. In recent years the focus has shifted to analysing the family and household structures of regions that had been absent in thematic or geographic terms, and to the conclusions that could be drawn (or generalised) from these. Instead of continuing to criticise the original theses of *Hajnal* (it is hard to say anything new in that respect) the question of further developing them has become foregrounded.

One group of authors did specific case studies and tried to approximate and align the resulting conclusions with *Hajnal's* theses. Let us now look at a few of these.

<sup>8</sup> This criticism is thought-provoking as its author is a famous anthropologist with extensive knowledge regarding the world outside Europe, who has actually put his finger on one of the genuine weak points of the *Hajnal* thesis: the shortcomings and accidental nature of the database concerning extra-European territories.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Burguière, A. 'Pour une typologie des formes d'organisation domestique de l'Europe moderne (XVIe–XIXe siècles)', *Annales E.S.C.* (41) 1986. No. 3, 639–655. pp.

*Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux* (1995) published a very interesting description of the functioning of stem families in the Pyrenees, and explicitly proved the existence of them during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well as their slow decay after 1900. She attributed great importance to the inheritance system characterising this region and a type of family organisation based on a rigid non-egalitarian property transmission system. In her view, stem families as systems are far from a rare phenomenon and can be viewed instead as the third basic form of co-resident units.

*Norbert Ortmayr* (1995) found three marriage patterns in the Alps, and constructed the so called 'Alpine marriage pattern' strongly defined by social stratification and the very slow progress of agricultural development (both of them related to given ecological characteristics). In addition late marriages this pattern was characterised by a very high rate (up to 30%) of persons who did not marry.

Beatrice Moring (1996) illustrated the temporal limits of a particular system of household, based on source material from South-West Finland. She discovered a local community where what *Hajnal* called the 'Eastern type' of early marriage was transformed into the 'North-Western type' (late marriage) in *Hajnal's* terms, in parallel with a gradual process of proletarianisation.

Part of the same interpretive tendency has been formed by conference sessions at which dozens of researchers have compared their case studies to each other in order to arrive at conclusions regarding household and family history, suitable for generalisation and supported by a broad base of data that the programmatic works offer. Without striving for totality we can mention a few important events of this kind. The Cambridge conference of the CORN group in 1998 concentrated on the connection between village economy and marriage (Devos and Kennedy 1999). The talks given at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Economic History (Fauve-Chamoux and Ochiai 1998) and the section comparing European and Asian family structures at the 19<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Historical Studies held in Oslo, as well as the preliminary conference to this event held in Liège in 2000 (Neven and Capron 2000) were also important elements of this trend in thought.

The present study offers no space for summarising each of the dozens of talks given at the events mentioned above. All we can do is to provide a sense of the dimensions of content, time and space that they covered. The research done by the CORN group summarises studies extending from 1350 to the 20<sup>th</sup> century and covering North Western Europe (British Isles, Scandinavia, one-time Netherlands and its successor states and Westphalia) (Devos and Kennedy 1999). In terms of content the studies mainly explore the questions of marriage, peasant and farm-based husbandry, prices, proto-industrialisation and state intervention.

The 20 writings examining stem family history in a Eurasian context mainly concentrated on Japan, China, Korea and Central Europe in the traditional sense (the German-speaking areas) as well as on Scandinavia, but they also included studies on Northern France, Eastern Europe as well as Vietnam, Thailand and

India. This was supplemented of the conference itself by considerations extending even to South-America (McCaa 1998). In terms of their topics the individual lectures were far narrower than the conference mentioned above – they concentrated, almost without exception, on one family form, that of the stem family. Although the majority of the authors used the methods and approach of historical demography, parts of the volume also explore sociological and anthropological perspectives.

The participants of the Liège and Oslo events essentially continued the Eurasian comparative research mentioned above, but instead of concentrating on the stem family, their attention extended to certain questions of historiography and ideology (family and belief system) and partly to the relationship between the family and the economy. They also included some geographic regions in the discussion which had previously been given less attention (Russia and Italy) (Neven and Capron 2000).

By relating the above, we are aiming to illustrate two facts. On the one hand, by perceiving an important phenomenon and stating it in a provocative fashion it is possible to include dozens of scholars and thus dozens of regions in related research; the debate around the *Hajnal* theses (with the help of *Peter Laslett's* equally provocative contribution) has 'globalised' research in household and family history. On the other hand, surveying the published results, the reader inevitably feels inspired to compare his own results with those disclosed here, to enrich his own methods with what has become known here, to compare his own sources with those generated in the course of the research of the functioning of other ages and societies. Such inspiration may also be helpful in enabling the scholar to view the results of research in his own country with some objectivity and distance and to attempt to position Hungarian population and society somewhere on the spectrum of Europe and the world. Thus it may be of interest to include a few experiences generated through non case-study type writings which can be utilised in relation to the Hungarian experience.

*Laurie Cornell* (1987), who is mainly involved in studying the historical demography of Japan, argued that it was necessary to extend *John Hajnal's* model in such a way as to include the stem family as the third family type. She emphatically drew attention to the importance of the results of historical demography related to Japan where it may be possible to observe the origin of life-cycle service as well as its decline, on the basis of mass-scale data. Her colleague, *Osamu Saito* (1997a, 1997b) went even further and distinguished between the European and the Japanese stem family. He claimed that although both of them had a three-generational composition, their structures were different. The proportion of co-resident relatives in the Japanese stem families was different in composition from those in Europe. The role of relatives, however, was far greater than in early modern Western Europe. Thus he believes that while the Western stem family was close to the nuclear family, its Japanese version had

affinities with neither the joint type, nor with the simple family household. Thus, it could be called a fourth rather than a third type. So, it can be seen as no accident that as early as 1998 an entire conference section was devoted to the problematic of the stem family, within a Eurasian project impressive in size and composition and financed by Japanese research funds (Fauve-Chamoux and Ochiai 1998).

American scholars were interested in other questions of the problematic of family, household and marriage. *Daniel Scott Smith* (1993), upon examining colonial North-American marriage patterns, found a significant distance between this and the pattern valid in North-Western Europe. On the other hand, he appraised the neo-local choice of residence as an important and decisive system of customs. He argued that this feature was the dominant factor of the model and not that of the 'lifecycle service' (which did not exist in this form there) and on this basis he declared Early America to be the part of North-West European household formation system.

His colleague, *Michael Haines* (1996) gladly accepted this thesis and stressed the important distance between Eastern Europe and Colonial North America, despite similarities in their contemporary marriage patterns. In other words, it is clear from the above considerations that in harmony with their own social historical past different groups of scholars are sensitive to different questions within the problematic of family – household – marriage. Naturally, it seems that, beside mere geographic connections, the classification of one's own society reflects psychological motivations and considerations pointing beyond the bounds of academic life. At least, from the present perspective, there is something comical in the efforts of certain North American authors making an effort to avoid the appearance of any resemblance between Colonial America and Eastern Europe.

The conclusions of *Jürgen Schlumbohm* (2000) are of relevance to us in at least two areas. On the one hand they reveal that the role of family systems in determining demographic behaviour has long been known to certain groups of experts in the social sciences. The writings of this author from Göttingen offers us a brief glimpse into the debate in German social sciences between the 1880's and 1930's around the relationship between the peasant inheritance system, the family system and population development. It was due to a negative political intervention that the useful elements of this German academic heritage were also forced to be become a latent undercurrent over decades. With the exception of a small number of well-informed persons this knowledge has functioned as a useful element in scholarly work. Another important observation concerning *Schlumbohm* actually concerns the results of his own micro-investigations. These led him to the conclusion that in the historical reality disclosed by the data, the marriage, family, kinship and inheritance systems of local societies functioned in a far more flexible way than any of the large theories would allow us to believe. His results offer a most justifiable warning about the dangers of simplification and rapid

generalisation practiced in the interest of model-building and about the frequently significant discrepancies between types, norm and real life.

*Theo Engelen* (1999) of Holland is one of the few exceptional scholars who compare 20<sup>th</sup> century demographic changes with *John Hajnal's* theses, more precisely, with that part of them which concerns marriage models. His analyses led him to the conclusion that the famous thesis can be declared erroneous in a number of points. Late marrying is prevalent in Western European cities, too, even though there are no apparent obstacles to early marriage in this context. Generally, he fails to see clearly the economic factors behind *Hajnal's* marriage model, even though these forces must or should have existed. He finds the statistical supporting apparatus of the model tenuous, as *Hajnal* usually used national mean figures which obviously fail to reflect the tendencies and sizes in regional differences, which are often rather significant. He is also sceptical as to whether the dichotomy set up by the illustrious author (early marrying as opposed to late marrying) is suitable for describing marriage systems of the world, particularly without taking on board the existence of transitional zones. Finally, he finds that the question of the temporal end of the model is similarly unclear. *Hajnal* names the 1940's as the time when this system ended, but *Engelen* believes that it was a lengthy process beginning as early as the 1930's, and that differences between Western and Eastern Europe are still observable after the 1960's (and in some places even the 1990's). Thus *Engelen's* results show, from the perspective of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and with the help of macro-statistical data, that the relevant model is not only time-bound in its origin but its transformation or disintegration is also observable from the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards. (In other words, the *Beatrice Moring's* study of 1996 referred to above presents something that is certainly not an isolated phenomenon.)

*Markus Cerman* and *James O. Brown*, who summarise recent research in family and household history (Cerman 1994; Brown and Cerman 1997) (chiefly based on micro-study results from Czech and Austrian areas) also warn that although the importance of the *Hajnal* theses is indubitable, we must beware of premature generalisations. While the *Hajnal*-line divides the territory of the one-time Austro-Hungarian Empire, empirical data shows that on the one hand, various family types cannot be so clearly discriminated in every case and on the other hand, as Cerman found, marriage patterns and the given household structure were not always closely interrelated. The two phenomena and structure are to be examined and interpreted separately. (Thus, his conclusions are in line with empirical evidence concerning Southern European societies.)

*Livi-Bacci's* book published in 1992, (Livi-Bacci 1992) emphatically claims that the existence of the marriage model outlined by *Hajnal* varies both in its temporality and its regional expansion. He also drew attention to the fact that at many points the *Hajnal*-line shows remarkable correspondence to the linguistic and cultural map of Europe. *Dirk van de Kaa* (1999) also proposes that the

numerous lines dividing Eastern from Western Europe that have been proposed during the previous debates about the definitions of the regions (geographic structure, expansion of Roman and Turkish occupation, dividing line between Eastern and Western Christianity, areas that had come under the influence of 18th and 19th century industrial revolution and those which had not etc.) ought to be somehow tuned in with the Hajnal-line.<sup>10</sup>

The works of *Richard Wall* (1998) reveal that Europe's regional variation in terms of family structure was already known before Hajnal's time. *Frédéric Le Play* distinguished three regions as early as the 1870's – Southern and Western Europe dominated by the stem family (the Eastern boundary was at the end of the continuous German-speaking area); the Northern areas (British Isles, Scandinavia, Holland and the North-German coast up to Prussia) where stem families do occur but their co-residence is, according to *Le Play*, unstable, and the region of patriarchal families. (The Russian Empire, the Balkans, and the Habsburg Monarchy). It is remarkable that *Le Play*'s map coincides not only with the pre-World War I. state boundaries but also with the Hajnal-line which connects Trieste with Saint Petersburg (except for the Baltic region which falls in the zone of the Western family system in this author's work). Thus *Hajnal*, although he does not refer to *Le Play*, actually presents a modern formulation of a demographic regionality which had long been suspected by other, earlier authors. It is only a peculiarity of the development of social sciences that the earlier mentioned German scholarly heritage and the French and Anglo-Saxon segments of relevant knowledge presented by *Richard Wall* (1998) and *André Burguicre* (1986) were so late in finding the way to each other and why this could only happen with Anglo-American mediation (not to mention the even more belated incorporation of Asian/Japanese research and cultural heritage in the 1980's and 1990's.)

Austrian research has also played an important part from the point of view of the *Hajnal* theses and the regionality of marriage, family and household types. There are two authors and two texts which deserve particular attention (both exist in slightly different English and German versions): the summarising works by *Michael Mitterauer* (1994, 1999) and *Karl Kaser* (1996, 1997a). *Mitterauer*, who originally started out as a mediaevalist, brings together the *Hajnal* line with the regionality problem long known to mediaevalist scholars, i.e. the boundaries between Eastern and Western Christianity and of Mediaeval European colonisation<sup>11</sup> (the so-called Carolingian line). According to his conclusion the

<sup>10</sup> In this proposal the author is following the line of thought expounded by Ad van der Woude ('Van St. Petersburg naar Triest. De Europese grenslijn?' In *Maatstaf* 1993. No. 5. 80-94).

<sup>11</sup> By this the present author, and historical research in general, usually mean the gradual migration of mediaeval German peasant and artisan population toward the East which resulted, between the 9th and 14th centuries in Central and Eastern Europe., in the emergence

'European marriage pattern' which *Hajnal* focuses on can be retraced to the middle ages and its expansion coincides with the eastern boundary of the Carolingian empire. All this is related to the estate system, with undivided inheritance and the expansion of servitude, all of which factors go back to the social organisation of the Holy Roman Empire.

Inspired by the above, *Karl Kaser* of Graz speaks of a Hajnal-Mitterauer - line and, adding his own thorough and wide-ranging research experience of the Balkans to *Mitterauer's* system of arguments, he attempts to create a coherent map of South-Eastern Europe's family types (Kaser 1996, 1997a). He claims that on the European territory we can observe four systems of marriage and family structure:

1. a household system based on the nuclear family and practising a neo-local choice of residence (Romania);
2. a life-cycle household system with complex households based on a patrilocal choice of residence, where the death of the head of the family is followed by the distribution of the assets (Hungary, Bulgaria, Continental Greece);
3. a household system based on the nuclear family and combined with a neo-local or uxori-local choice of residence;
4. a lifecycle household system of joint households based on a patrilocal choice of residence, where the death of the head of the family is not followed by the distribution of the assets, the family unit with its complex structure can survive and be renewed over a long period (mainly Albania, Serbia, Croatia but small areas with a similar structure also occur in Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary, according to *Kaser*).

*Kaser* adds to these types a fifth zone which comprises Slovenia, Western Hungary and the Western edge of the Carpathians (today's Western Slovakia) where he finds no clearly dominant family or marriage characteristics.

Thus, proposals by Austrian historical demographers and social historians are not only exciting in the broader sense of families and households but also specifically concern the characteristics of the social organisation of past Hungarian society and its place in Europe in the context of the texts in question. At the same time, the above mentioned studies also contain points of uncertainty, imprecision and occasional error, in terms of the past of Hungarian population and society.<sup>12</sup> It is therefore justified for us to attempt to juxtapose the Hungarian

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of villages of 'German right' and mining and trading towns taking on German urban privileges, both possessing mainly German populations.

<sup>12</sup> *Karl Kaser*, for example, refers in connection to his statements on Hungary to works by *Rudolf Andorka* and the present author as well as to Hungarian ethnographic literature published in foreign languages but without using historic sources referring to any specific population (*Jenő Barabás*, *Béla Guda*, *Judit Morvay* on the extended family and *László Földes* and *Attila Paládi-Kovács* on shepherd life). We feel that these texts do not allow for

family system with the Hajnal (or Hajnal-Mitterauer) line and to attempt a brief coherent description of the Hungarian family and household structures. The experiences arising from the texts listed above and briefly summarised, covering a broader time period and geographic spectrum, also inspire us to do so.

First of all, it is quite clear that when a phenomenon, in this case that of marriage and the formation of households, is comprised into a model, it always inspires a great deal of research. It generates strivings to check and justify the model and exploits the model's potential to systematise source data. On the other hand, a model also serves as a warning that we have to be cautious in our choice of database for our more general conclusions. For reliable results it is not enough to lean on a great number of cases but these have to be capable of reflecting regional differences too. So far as possible, it is also desirable to make an attempt to align major national and regional averages with the results of micro-examinations. Last but not least, the results must be suited to sketch out, at least in rough outlines, the connections of demographic and other (social, cultural, legal and political) phenomena and processes with families and households. We must learn to accept the fact that neither the phenomenon of marrying, nor families and households as social and demographic base units, constitute *a priori* pure demographic structures or processes.

#### JOHN HAJNAL AND THE MARRIAGE AND HOUSEHOLD SYSTEM OF PRE-INDUSTRIAL RURAL HUNGARY

For a Hungarian scholar of historical demography, the debate over systems of marriage and household formation seems exciting for several reasons. First, the topic (and the debate which surrounds it) is interesting in its own right as it concerns one of the most important problems of our social and demographic history. Secondly, it is interesting by virtue of the fact that it marks out the place of Hungary on the historical demographic map of Europe (and the world) as clearly belonging to the Eastern hemisphere. Moreover, the data of historical Hungary was used at several points of the 'System' as statistical arguments with which the author, originally of Hungarian origin himself, presented the difference between Eastern and Western systems for the emergence of households. So, for the next few pages we shall try very briefly to confront the demographic data known to us about the history of the Hungarian population with the rules described by *Hajnal*. It is necessary to indicate, however, that, due to the limits of sources, in the forthcoming section we shall follow the example of *John Hajnal* himself and

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such sweeping conclusions as the author draws. The Hungarian parts of his family typology maps, which take into account the present-day borders, were probably drawn on the basis of the original published by *Rudolf Andorka* and the present author about historical Hungary, with little attention to the work's regional precision.

focus on the rural population which constituted about 85% of the contemporary total at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

*A general picture*

To what extent does the national data of pre-industrial Hungary comply with *Hajnal's* rules? According to his specifications, if a population lives in a society which is fundamentally dominated by joint households (of a complex structure) this population has to be characterized by early marriages (Rule II/1). The earliest Hungarian national data which can be used for such calculations, those of 1777, show that the mean age of first marriages was 22,5 for men and 20,5 for women for the territory of historical Hungary in the narrow sense (i.e. without Transylvania, Croatia, the Military Border and Banat province). This satisfies the rules. The age at which men marry and when they become heads of family must show a significant discrepancy (i.e. the newly wed couple do not usually set up a new household (Rule II/2) – this also seems to hold for the majority of pre-industrial Hungary (Faragó 1995). But there are problems in the case of the Rule II/3 concerning the way in which men become heads of households. In the literature we can find descriptions as well as case-studies dissimilar to *Hajnal's* examples (where households divide into smaller units through inheritance or simple division, but retain their joint character) – in many cases, data shows the formation of new household units emerging through a neo-local choice of residence (i.e. when the newly married son instantly leaves the paternal household). In other cases, the division of large households resulted in the emergence of purely nuclear family based households.

In the case of service the problem seems even more complicated. The Hungarian situation almost entirely complies with the rules described by *Hajnal* based on Western European characteristics: the proportion of servants is a little above 6 percent in the total rural population (1777), the overwhelming majority of them are not married and, as far as we know, their place in the division of activities at the farms as well as their social status nearly completely fulfil the requirements *Hajnal* proposed. There are only two points where these findings cannot be made to agree *Hajnal's* description. On the one hand, it is not quite clear what proportion of hired farmhands belonged to the 'life-cycle servant' category – certainly not all of them. On the other hand, the contemporary social status of the servants is also unclear. Some part of them most certainly came from poor cottager families whose life-cycle was different from those farmhands used as a sample for Western Europe. Their life-cycle moved along the following stages and statuses: unmarried servant – married cottager (with no property) – widowed poor relative (Faragó

1995). Thus the situation is not quite clear at our present stage of knowledge.<sup>13</sup> The situation becomes even more frustrating however if we take one step back from the level of national data and start examining the regional variation of the Hungarian population of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century on the basis of data in a breakdown by county.

#### *A regional view of Hungary*

The data utilized in this analysis for the quantitative study of marriage and household in pre-industrial Hungary is relatively unusual. Perhaps their most significant feature is their aggregate character which renders them capable of presenting only a rough picture of the problem in hand. This is a serious shortcoming. However, precisely because this data is so large scale, they manage to cover the entire territory of historical Hungary (which includes precisely 15 thousand settlements in the broad sense and in the narrow sense specified above it extends to roughly 8000 towns and villages). This is important because, taking into account the present scholarly capacity of Hungary, analysing the whole of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian society from this one point of view on the community level or in the form of case-studies would take several decades, even if sampling methods were used.

In the last decade of the reign of the well known enlightened Habsburg queen, Maria Theresia, as well as during the time of her son and successor Joseph II., there were several population enumerations in Hungary. The first official census was held in 1784/85 applying Austrian methods and practice (followed by two revisions in 1786 and 1787). Some of the summaries of this huge statistical operation survived – many on a county level and, in the case of the census, on a village level. A considerable portion of these have been published (Thirring 1938, Dányi and Dávid 1960 etc.). These sources allow us to analyse the most important characteristics of marriage, family and household structure in Hungary on a comprehensive scale.<sup>14</sup> Naturally, taking into consideration the low level of the skill of contemporary bureaucracy (not to mention the ignorance of statistics amid

<sup>13</sup>If we try to make a comparison using the typology described by *Peter Laslett* (1983, pp. 526–527), the result of such an experiment will be even worse. According to his ‘tendencies’ Hungary could be characterized by a near-Mediterranean type household, which does not seem really realistic. Here we share the opinion of the scholars dealing with Italian family history (Benigno 1989; Kertzer and Hogan 1991): the problem is not, in the main the peculiar character of Hungary, but the set of criteria suggested. They do not adequately describe the marriage, family and household systems of those areas of Europe they are believed to characterise.

<sup>14</sup>Some published results of the first census were also used by *John Hajnal* (‘system’ pp. 469, 482) but he could not go into details in the course of his analysis, not being familiar enough with the source and the related literature.

a provincial nobility which had been forced by the central government to carry out data collection among the local population), there are bound to be serious shortcomings and omissions in the data which might be dangerously misleading regarding certain settlements. On the county level, however, the data appear relatively reliable, at least to the extent of allowing us to draw a rough map of the social and demographic reality of the time in question.

If we project onto a map the calculated female mean age at first marriages for 1777 (Map 1), which was estimated on the basis of the age structure of the marriages registered by the population enumeration of that year,<sup>15</sup> – we find an unequal distribution of marriage patterns in pre-industrial rural Hungary<sup>16</sup>. Although the mean female age at marriage was much lower in late eighteenth century Hungary than was characteristic for contemporary Western Europe (Flinn 1981), we cannot say that teenage marriages dominated. We may identify several distinct regions in the country in terms of age at marriage. In the Western and Northern counties this average age is relatively high – around 21 years. In the central and Eastern part of the county the age at marriage is in line with the national average, this being 20 years, while in a third group of counties, mostly those on the Eastern edge of the Great Plain, the average age at marriage is under 20 years, i.e. marriages are contracted really early, meeting the theory of the Eastern marriage model. Regional differences in average age at marriage are even more clearly shown if we look at the proportion of young peasant women married under the age of 20 in each county (Map 2). According to this view, there are only two insular areas (Árva and Szepes counties in the Northern Carpathians and Sopron, Moson and Pozsony counties near the Austrian border) where marriage over 20 dominates. If we draw a line from Lake Balaton to the Zemplén hills in the North-East of the country, South-East of this line approximately two thirds, and in some parts three quarters, of the women are under 20 at marriage according to our data. In fact, according to this data, the area of early marriage even appears north of this line in Central Trans-Danubia (Győr and Veszprém counties) and in the Palóc region (Hont, Nógrád, Gömör, Borsod counties) in Northern Hungary. These are the areas which are truly characterised by the 'Eastern marriage model.'

Looking at the distribution of servants by county (Map 3), the separation of the different regions is perhaps even more distinct. In the western part of the country, dividing the area of historical Hungary with a new Southwest-Northeast line which is slightly further Northwest than that defining differences in age at

<sup>15</sup>Based on the literature of Hungarian historical demography and on our research experience (which does not register many first marriages in the pre-industrial period where the female was under 15 or over 30, we made our estimate on the basis of the first three female marrying age groups: below 21, 21–25 and 26–30.

<sup>16</sup>The county values consist of only village and market town populations, the royal free cities were surveyed separately, partly with different questions (for example it was not possible to estimate the average age at marriage from this data).

marriage, we find a Western European level in the frequency of servants. The proportion of servants in the total population is over 6% in every county, and in certain places it is around 10%. Considering that this area was the home of a large population of poor cottagers (Faragó 1977), this means mainly that peasant farmsteads used servants in these areas. Conversely, in the South-Eastern region, the majority of which was re-populated or re-settled after the expulsion of the Turks, and in Croatia, low proportions reveal that farms used hardly any hired servants. The above map is confirmed by data concerning servant migration (Map 4) as the 1777/78 summaries of the population enumerations provide a county breakdown of the numbers of servants who had arrived in the surveyed area (village or town) with the aim of seeking service. The regional breakdown of the data is even sharper than above, as a large proportion of servant migration (probably resulting from the contractual nature of service) only seems considerable for a small Western and Northern area but not for the Central and Eastern counties.

Seemingly this is a situation where we have reproduced in a minor form *Hajnal's* boundary within the frame of one country (pushing the line slightly toward the East). But let us go further. If we attempt to localize regions where the proportions of extended or joint family households were higher (this can be measured quite easily and accurately through the average number of married men per household from the results of the first census) we get a completely different picture from that above (Map 5). There is a significant part of the country which ought to be characterised by a strong presence of complex joint households but in fact is not (in Eastern Hungary) and at the same time in the central part of the Northern area, where age at first marriage is higher than average and servant hiring is relatively high in proportion, our data points clearly to the predominance of complex joint households. There is nothing extraordinary in finding that the lowest married male proportions, (i.e. the simplest households: in all probability dominantly nuclear family units) are characteristic of the Western ('Westernised') part of Hungary. This is in accordance with *Hajnal's* theses. It is more difficult to interpret the fact that we find the same simple family structure in the sparsely inhabited and economically and socially most underdeveloped areas of Rusyn and Sekler to the East as we find in the Western counties of Moson and Sopron. These maps and territorial distributions suggest that the connections between service, early age at marriage and the incidence of joint family households are far from clear and can in no way be called unquestionable.

Hopefully the earlier survey of the relevant literature was convincing enough in showing that the connection between the economic, social, demographic and cultural characteristics of family and household are complicated even in a society whose development had been unimpeded. However, the development of Hungarian society can be called anything but undisturbed in the modern period. Between 1526 and 1699 a considerable part of the country lived under Turkish

rule (the Banat province was occupied till 1718). The numerous wars of this period, as well as the epidemics of the plague which followed the various armies marching through the country, took heavy tolls on the population of Central and Southern Hungary. Thus it is no wonder that after the period of warfare was over, these under-populated areas attracted a high number of settlers and the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw a period of immigration, as well as internal re-migration, lasting through several decades. This resulted by the middle or the end of the century in a population somewhat distorted in terms of gender and age which also differed considerably from the previous period in terms of denominational and ethnic composition. Although the re-settling movement was more or less over by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, traces of this deformed population structure are still noticeable in the data of the 1787 census. The Southern and Eastern part of the country are still characterised by a considerable male surplus probably owing to the gender bias of the immigration movement (Map 6), while the proportion of the young age groups is also higher than average in these areas.

The Western and Northern parts of the country, which stayed under Christian rule and were not involved in the long-lasting wars, were still densely populated at the end of the 18th century (Map 8), although dozens of thousands of their population surplus had left these counties during the previous decades and formed settler islands in the re-populated central and Southern territories. As a consequence of the above, the structure of the population in terms of gender and age groups was far more balanced in the ex-monarchical counties in Central Hungary. The ethno-cultural map of the country had also become much more colourful as a result of the internal and international waves of migration but unfortunately there exists no statistically correct database which could be projected onto a map to display this distribution for the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### *Statistical analysis of variables*

In the last few decades the composition of households in the past has been the subject of a considerable number of quantitative historical investigations both on a micro and on a macro-level. In the case of pre-industrial Hungary, the analyses presented in such studies relied mostly on simple statistical procedures such as proportions and cross-tabulations. While a number of such studies have made important contributions to the topic, their dependence on a single and simple method of statistical analysis raises a question common in quantitative research, namely: to what extent are empirical results and their modest statistical analyses capable of producing valuable interpretations and explanations to the specific problems exposed?

In the next few paragraphs we attempt to use slightly more advanced methods to test the proposals gained through the above regional distributions. In order to

gain an indication of the strength of the results, two different techniques will be employed: simple zero order correlations and multiple regression analysis<sup>17</sup>.

In testing the family and household formation system of pre-industrial Hungary we used four measurable variables (age structure, age at marriage, family structure, frequency of service and a further four variables to test the general populational conditions (gender composition, population density, agricultural density and an artificial indicator to show the effect of Turkish occupation). (The variables used in the analysis are defined in Table 1.) The latter group of variables is crucial in the case of Hungary since, as we mentioned above, 18<sup>th</sup> century population conditions were rather peculiar in this country and thus there is reason to assume that this situation may have influenced the family and household structure too. As a first step of our analysis we produced the simple linear correlations, then went on to calculate the multiple regression. In the first step the household composition was specified as a dependent variable to be a function of the other variables. In the next step we kept changing the dependent variables – first taking the frequency of service, then that of early marriage instead of family composition as the dependent variable. In the meantime we repeatedly checked the strength and interpretative value of the regressions. In the calculations we considered it advisable to use slightly different indicators than for constructing the map. For the sake of homogeneity we mostly used proportions and we calculated the majority of our figures for males. This is based on the two very probable suppositions that data regarding men are more ample and precise in this period than those concerning women, and that this way we would not have to burden our calculations with the imprecisions caused by differences between the genders in the various indicators and distributions. We also had to reduce the geographical territory used in these calculations: Croatia and the three Southern counties of the Temes province (the so called ‘Banat’) were excluded from the analysis because of their scanty and unstable data.

<sup>17</sup>I owe many thanks to my colleagues *Emil Valkovics* and *László Hablicsek* for their invaluable help in calculations.

Table 1  
*Demographic characteristics of counties of the Hungarian Kingdom  
 at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century  
 (Variables used in the analysis.)*

Variable	Mean value <sup>a</sup>	Definition
	Percentage	
YOUNGMAR	28,7	proportion of males married between the ages of 16–20 among the total of marriages contracted between the ages of 16–35 (1777–78)
GENDER	50,8	proportion of males within the Christian population (1787)
FAMCOMP	103,8	number of married Christian males per 100 Christian households (1787) – measure of household complexity
SERVANT	62,0	proportion of newly arrived persons entering service from the total number of immigrants (1777–78)
POPDENS	30,7	number of Christian inhabitants per km <sup>2</sup> (1787)
AGRDENS	62,5	number of Christian inhabitants per km <sup>2</sup> of agricultural territory – (total land – forestland) (1787)
YOUNGAGE	52,9	proportion of ‘sons’ and ‘heirs’ (men between 0 and 17 yrs of age) in the total Christian population (1787)
DEVAST	0,4	1 if formerly Turkish occupied territory, 0,5 if border county (constantly suffering from warfare)

Number of investigated counties: 43<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Values are county totals, royal free cities excluded. Only the figures for Christian population used, Jews (1,0%) were excluded as their demographic characteristics were incomplete.

<sup>b</sup>One county (Ugocsa), the Banat and Transylvania have not enough comparable data – they were excluded from the analysis.

The main, and preliminary, result of the analysis could be summarised as follows. If we look at the inter-correlations of the basic factors (Table 2), we can see that our variables can be divided practically into two separate groups. The variables of early marriage (YOUNGMAR), gender composition (GENDER), as well as the impact and consequence of Turkish rule (population density and agricultural density – POPDENS and AGRDENS) and the involvement in the wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (DEVAST) are relatively strongly inter-correlated with each other. Nearly all of their values are significant and close to the two thirds of the figures are over 0,4 (i.e. they are significant at  $p=0.01$ ). Outside this group there are partly scattered variables in controversial connection with the others. The variable of family and household structure (FAMCOMP) is

only strongly correlated with early marriage (YOUNGMAR) and slightly with gender structure (GENDER). The strong connection between complex family structure and early marriage is no surprise as this fits into the *Hajnal* theory, but there is no significant correlation (not even negative) between service (SERVANT) and family composition (FAMCOMP), which is somewhat surprising. The variable characterizing the strength and frequency of keeping servants (SERVANT) is in moderate connection with the majority of the other factors used, except for the two where a strong correlation was expected. In the case of age structure (YOUNGAGE) and family and household structure (FAMCOMP) we again see practically no significant correlation. The frequency of service appears almost independent of family and household structure both in strength and in territoriality (see Maps 2–4). Such low correlation between the SERVANT and the YOUNGAGE variables also suggests that in eighteenth century Hungary service cannot have been an organic part of the life-cycle of rural young people. The variable indicating the proportion of young population (YOUNGAGE) is practically independent of almost all the other variables, reinforcing the general opinion that all pre-industrial populations are dominated by a high proportion of young people regardless of other factors (marriage, migration, family structure, etc.).

If we observe the eight variables together, we also arrive at some interesting results (Table 3). The strength of multiple regression is relatively good if we use family and household structure as the dependent variable – the remaining seven variables account for 52% of the variance in household type. YOUNGMAR and AGRDENS can be considered the most important positive variables – the pattern of early marriage has a strong positive impact, and overpopulation (the high agricultural density) a moderate positive impact on the complexity of forms of co-residence. If we take service (SERVANT) as the dependent variable, the analysis gives much poorer results. Two thirds (i.e. the majority) of the variance in keeping servant depend on variables not involved in this investigation (probably economic and cultural factors). The only important, negative, variable for service is YOUNGMAR. In other words if the custom of early marrying is active in an area, this has a negative effect on the incidence of keeping servants.

Table 2  
*Zero order correlations among variables of demographic characteristics of counties in the Hungarian Kingdom at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century*

Variables	YOUNGMAR	GENDER	FAMCOMP	SERVANT	POPDENS	AGRDENS	YOUNGAGE
YOUNGMAR							
GENDER	<u>0,549</u>						
FAMCOMP	<u>0,571</u>	0,330					
SERVANT	<u>-0,432</u>	<u>-0,463</u>	-0,073				
POPDENS	<u>-0,464</u>	<u>-0,658</u>	-0,181	0,332			
AGRDENS	-0,193	<u>-0,652</u>	0,129	0,368	<u>0,641</u>		
YOUNGAGE	0,216	0,097	-0,019	-0,016	-0,088	0,092	
DEVAST	<u>0,325</u>	<u>0,694</u>	0,221	<u>-0,313</u>	<u>-0,405</u>	<u>-0,522</u>	0,091

two tailed significance

YOUNGMAR							
GENDER	<u>0,000</u>						
FAMCOMP	<u>0,000</u>	0,031					
SERVANT	<u>0,004</u>	<u>0,002</u>	0,643				
POPDENS	<u>0,002</u>	<u>0,000</u>	0,244	0,030			
AGRDENS	0,216	<u>0,000</u>	0,409	0,015	<u>0,000</u>		
YOUNGAGE	0,164	0,538	0,904	0,920	0,576	0,556	
DEVAST	0,033	<u>0,000</u>	0,155	0,041	<u>0,007</u>	<u>0,000</u>	0,560

\_\_\_ significant at p = 0,01 level

---- significant at p = 0,05 level

Table 3  
*Results of multiple regression for the most important variables of family and household structure in the Hungarian Kingdom at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century*

Dependent variable	Multiple		Important variables	
	R	R2	+	-
FAMCOMP	0,7188	0,5166	YOUNGMAR AGRDENS	
SERVANT	0,5707	0,3257		YOUNGMAR
YOUNGMAR	0,7704	0,5935	FAMCOMP	SERVANT

An intriguing result may be observed in terms of early marriages if we take YOUNGMAR as the dependent variable. This is where the interpretative force of our analysis at its strongest – nearly 60 percent of the variance can be explained with the help of our eight variables. The controversial role of FAMCOMP and SERVANT variables is really interesting in this case. Our investigations suggest that the complexity of forms of co-residence (the weight of joint and extended families) has a strong positive impact on the strength of the custom of early marriage, while the incidence of service has a negative impact on it.

After this brief survey let us try to interpret our results. On the basis of multiple regression we can suppose a relatively strong positive connection between the custom of early marriage and the existence of complex forms of co-residence. We can also suppose a moderate negative connection between keeping servant and early marriage, which fits Hajnal's theory. However, the above analysis also indicates some problems in the theory. The connection between keeping servant and early marriage is only moderate while the majority (two thirds) of interpretative factors are related to factors outside the sphere of this investigation. No real connection (not even negative) obtains between family structure and keeping servants, but agricultural density has a slightly positive impact on the incidence of more complex forms of co-residence. This means that behind the strength of customs of co-residence and marriage patterns as well as the incidence of keeping servant there must be several distinct demographic, economic and cultural groups of factors. We ought to be particularly suspicious of the importance of cultural factors which we have not been able to identify or analyse in any significant detail in the present study. In our case this may include the influence of local systems of customs as well as the distinctive ethnic and denominational conditions of the different territories (and also the unique distribution of such groups characteristic of Hungary). The regional distribution and strength of these factors partly depends on the earlier residential and population structure and partly on the geographic position and cultural setting of the given local society. All of these had undergone considerable change as a result of the Turkish wars, particularly in the Southern part of Hungary. The long period of Turkish rule created changes in the ethno-cultural structure of the country and also had a great influence on economic and demographic conditions. Wars and the separation between the part of Hungary under Turkish rule and the part ruled by the Habsburgs both acted to block the internal migration movement of the population surplus between the hilly parts of the country and the plains until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This resulted in overpopulation (high agricultural density) and an increase in the number of complex co-resident communities (families and households) in the former areas and under-population combined with smaller families in the latter territories.

Nevertheless, we have to treat the above generalisations with caution. Even the joint measuring of the eight factors is insufficient and gives a very poor representation of the complexity of the household structures of the Hungary of those times. The fact is that at this moment we are still unable to gauge the effect of various cultural factors (ethnic and denominational composition, not to mention the local customs of marriage, and inheritance). We must also note that although the database founded on county-level data covers a large mass of the population, it provides a relatively low case number in terms of the entities used for the analysis and is only able to offer a rough view of Hungarian society of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Based on the above results we tried to describe and localize the tentative household types of rural Hungary at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. First, we have a region which could be characterized by traits quite close to the Western European family structure. (This is close to *Kaser's* transitional region (Kaser 1996, 1997a), but is naturally more finely drawn.) Perhaps it is not really accidental that this type occurs most frequently along the Western borders of the country. It can be characterised by a relatively high age at marriage and a high frequency of employing servants. As case studies are absent, we unfortunately cannot tell what role life-cycle service played in this sphere.<sup>18</sup> Our data shows that the majority of households in this region were relatively small and simple in structure – we mainly find nuclear family households although we can also assume the existence of some stem families (Baross 1902; Mattyasovszky 1904). One remark, however, is called for at this point regarding the question of age at marriage. Although this is the area in Hungary with the highest ages at marriage, even these can be regarded as rather young compared to Western Europe. In this region which is ethnoculturally mixed in a number of aspects (this transition zone was inhabited in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century mainly by German, Hungarian and Slovak and occasionally by Croatian and Slovenian people), there was probably a mixture of various cultural influences. This is not simply a consequence of ethnic variety, as customs and forms of social organisation were also probably transmitted between the various groups through simple diffusion. The differences of legal, political and economic conditions from those of the Holy Roman Empire, the discrepancies in standards of urbanisation and division of labour (industrial development) and many other, less obvious factors, probably also played their part in the emergence of unique family, marriage and household patterns. At any rate, for want of better terms and to avoid waiting for the results of the detailed analyses we could call the forms of co-residence developed in the population of this region the 'Central European nuclear family' and the 'Central European stem family.'

<sup>18</sup> The difficulty is mainly in the fact that the family and household structure relations of the peasantry of the Western border area, which are perhaps most heavily characterised by the employment of servants, have not really been analysed by Hungarian research to date. As far as we know, Austrian researchers have not done much in this field, either, despite the fact that the majority of this area is today an Austrian province under the name Burgenland and

A significant part of historical Hungary, primarily the southern border areas, can be characterised by large and complex co-residents groups of the same kind as researchers described for contemporary Russia and the Balkans (Aleksandrov 1982; Czap 1982; Hoch 1983; Hammel 1975; Kaser 1995, 1997b; Todorova 1993). In the South there were often not only two but several families living and working as one organised group. It is interesting that the majority of areas of this kind was not only in those parts of Hungary which lie relatively close to the Balkans but the residents themselves were mainly of Croatian or Serbian origin who had migrated into Hungary from among the mountains of the Balkans after the Turkish wars. This population had kept its original customs, most of them married very early and macro-statistical data of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (household sizes over 8 people) make it rather likely that they lived in large, complex, ‘*zadruga*’ type households. These groups very rarely included servants – the farms and the labour structure of the group were essentially founded upon kinship relations. These co-resident groups might be termed the ‘Southeast European extended family’ until their internal relations, functioning and the kinship system and demographic processes in their background have been clarified.

The fourth basic type of household to be found in 18<sup>th</sup> century Hungary might be termed ‘the Central European complex household’. Their population mainly emerged through Hungarian internal migration (people moving from the hilly parts to the Great Plain) and through international immigration. The immigrants mainly arrived from the German Empire and Austria after the Turkish wars to the depopulated Central and Southern Hungarian areas. Their co-resident groups were usually simple in structure and were limited to the family of the head of the household. There were very few servants. The marrying age, however, is usually very young, thus families can be expected to have had a relatively high number of children. Therefore, we could say that in terms of their border position and demographic characteristics the families of non-South Slavic origin (despite the protests of North American researchers) show similarities to those living among the conditions of colonial North America.<sup>19</sup>

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the majority of the population belonged to the German-Austrian ethno-cultural group as early as the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>19</sup> The difference between the two areas did not mainly lie in the 18<sup>th</sup> century conditions (Smith 1993; Haines 1996) but in the social development following that period. Border areas were closed off much earlier in Hungary, at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, in other words well before the beginning of industrialisation while, except for free market towns and areas of the plains, they reverted to being agricultural areas organised into so called ‘feudal relations’. The society integrating new settlers functioned totally differently in Hungary than it did in North America in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the newcomers had to adapt to an economic, social and political setting very different from that in Western Europe (Várkonyi 1970). Thus it is barely extraordinary that the eradication of frontier conditions by closing the borders led to an increase in the number of ‘Eastern type’ complex households in several other parts of the country (Faragó 1977).

Naturally, other interpretations of the results found here are also possible. We would need far more information on Hungarian household patterns, families and households in order to be able to define the truly important and frequent, relevant types. Certain things, however, can be predicted already. Several hill country peasant populations (Slovakians, Poles (Gorals), Romanians, Rusyns and Seklers)<sup>20</sup>, who lived as shepherds or settlers of the deforested areas in the Carpathians, cannot be distinguished on the basis of county data and up to this point we do not have much information about their family and household conditions and marriage customs. There were probably measurable differences between the family and household conditions of various social groups<sup>21</sup>, such as land-owning peasants, cottagers, rural artisans and the country gentry.<sup>22</sup> However, one fact is obviously clear. Neither the factors and variables determining the emergence of households, nor the regional distribution of household types can be interpreted and described in an unproblematic fashion for historical Hungary using *Hajnal's* theses. First of all, the demographic factors used in the 'system' are not always clear. Secondly, the demographic factors are not always satisfactory for describing and explaining the functioning of various household types. The latter must be treated as a socio-demographic model, taking into account the non-demographic background factors of the Hungary of that time. Thirdly, the weight and the direction of the connection between the various factors might also change over the times – thus, for example, we may suspect whether that the devastation of the assets, villages and people during the Turkish wars and the resettling movements which followed led to the Hungarian rural population of some regions becoming more 'eastern' in terms of demographic and family/household conditions. Keeping servants appears to be a factor more or less independent of household type in Hungary. Last, but not least: the phenomena and types connected to families and households cannot be separated, according to our data, with a clear dividing line (cf. *Hajnal*, 1965) – their regionality can be likened to a colourful woven cloth rather than a clear-cut territorial division.

<sup>20</sup>In terms of religious denomination the first two groups are Roman Catholics although Slovaks also include some Lutherans, while the latter followed the Greek rite (were Greek Catholic or Greek Orthodox). The majority of the Seklers were Calvinists, one part (those in Csík county) were Roman Catholic.

<sup>21</sup>In this question we disagree with *John Hajnal*. He wrote in the 'system' that 'all layers of the rural societies dealt with in this paper, from the rich to the very poor, followed the same household rules' (pp. 454–455). We would refrain from such a clear-cut opinion in this question. Although occasional similarities and identities irrespective of social strata cannot be ruled out entirely, we believe that for a proper clarification of the question further investigations are required.

<sup>22</sup>The importance of the gentry as a social stratum needs to be emphasised here. We know little of their demographic, family and household characteristics, although their proportion reached 5% nationally by the end of the 18th century. (In fact there were counties where this rate was over 15%.)

## CONCLUSION

The present text was written with the aim of discussing Hajnal's theses but it seemed inevitable, besides making a critique of household typology, to diverge to some extent toward creating a household typology. It was on the basis of population enumeration data that we confronted Hungarian data with *Hajnal's* theses and provided a brief statistical analysis – this has not enabled us to apply a dynamic approach to the problem of household structure. We are aware that the functioning of certain systems can only be understood through becoming acquainted with the individual life-cycle of the persons living in them and the communal life-cycle of the group.<sup>23</sup> This, however, is practically only possible through micro-studies – both macro and micro-studies have their own place and function. The aim of this text, beyond that stated above, can be none other than making a proposal for further research on the number, character and territorial distribution of possible further types. Some in depth examinations will be required in order to decide just how real and important the proposed family and household types are, what demographic, social, legal (inheritance) procedures and economic and cultural setting served as the background to their functioning. The base types will only fill out once their functions, the sphere of their participants and their functions, economic, social and cultural environments are revealed (and clearly distinguished from each other). We are convinced that all of us ought to avoid the kind of manufacturing of household types which was still going on in the international literature of the 1970's and which was based purely on formal traits and differences in percentage points.

If we try to review and consider once more what would be the best path on which to progress further along the way of exploring marriage, family and household systems, we find that we have not very many choices at the moment. Either we wait for the birth of a new general theory or we try to collate the useful and important elements from earlier typologies and hypotheses. As far as 'grand theory' is concerned, there are still problems waiting to be (or never to be) solved which may inspire adventurous model builders. Marriages, family and household types of the pre-industrial period are extremely complicated and combine a most varied array of demographic, economic, social and cultural factors. This may inspire some to create new typologies and execute novel

<sup>23</sup> Limitations of sources and methodology (e. g. a statistical approach) as well as the aim of an examination, can define the approach to a problem. If in the present paper we did not talk about life and family cycles this does not mean that we are not aware of them or do not consider them important- but we would find it comical if someone tried to argue in defence of it in the style of Lutz Berkner's criticism of Peter Laslett thirty years ago. (For an analysis of misunderstandings see Peter Laslett's sarcastic responses. Laslett 1987)

modelling experiments. The other solution, and this is what seems most acceptable to us, is to accept *Philip Kraeger's* proposal and give up thinking in terms of universalistic regimes and adopt instead a regionally and temporally limited frame of reference (Kraeger 1986).

On the basis of the above we must be prepared that within the borders of each country (or even region) there may exist as many as two or even more systems for the emergence of households. In this respect, besides Hungary, we can also quote Italian and Spanish examples (Benigno 1989). Naturally, we do not think that the two systems of household formation proposed by *Hajnal* should be replaced by several dozen household types or patterns for marriage and household formation. It is definite, however, that pre-industrial societies cannot be characterised by this simple dichotomy,<sup>24</sup> but we do not believe that the number of demographic systems actually functioning was historically too large.

The line of argument here expounded may certainly be called sketchy. Still, we hope we have been successful in drawing attention to the fact that while to some extent it is necessary to have theoretical approaches (or at least to rethink earlier theories), these need to be far more concrete and far more solidly based on factual data than they have been heretofore. As far as the theoretical work is concerned, it seems high time to give up those approaches which are centred around Western Europe and which are coming to appear increasingly parochial. This latter will not be easy and there is plenty of work waiting to be done both in the field of creating conceptually selected and well-prepared case studies and in carrying out the experiments for generalisation based on these, whilst injecting the new results into the bloodstream of international research.

It might be useful to follow the example of Austrian researchers in connecting the arguments and results of the debate about the concept of Central Europe/Eastern Europe, and on 'divergence' with regard to the regionality of family and household systems as basic units of social organisation and demographic processes. (By creating typologies based on specific characteristics and by making historical case studies more concrete perhaps we could resolve to

<sup>24</sup> Incidentally, if we look at one of the grandest projects of demographic research (with several historical ramifications), the European Fertility Project carried out under the auspices of Princeton University, we find that a very similar picture can be drawn of the process of the decline of fertility. Although the authors of the chapter summarising the results of the research are attracted to thinking in terms of a binary marriage model, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century data they present (1870–1900) also allow different conclusions. On the basis of the Princeton indexes of married women (*Im*) and married fertility (*Ig*) at least on marriage zones appear on the map of Europe. Naturally, these often do not coincide with political boundaries and not all the populations of the regions examined can be fitted into this picture. Thus, for example, the majority of France (except for Bretagne) and Central and Southern Hungary definitely cannot be included into any of the four zones listed in the concluding paper (Coale and Watkins 1986).

some extent the increasingly offensive broadness and sterility of the debates surrounding the definition of Central and Eastern Europe as regions.)<sup>25</sup>

To return to our point of departure: we have to be grateful to *John Hajnal* for these two brilliant studies. They have fulfilled perfectly the basic mission of theoretical studies. They have interpreted connections and processes, connected seemingly disparate factors, and provoked clarifying debates. As a consequence of these, it has become the point of departure for a great amount of research and is still likely to generate more. However, the futuristic prophecy of the author about his own work seems to be coming true, 'It may turn out, when statistical data on households for many more populations have been analyzed, that it is not fruitful to group together all the populations exhibiting those household formation rules that for the purposes of this paper are the defining characteristics of joint household systems' ('System', p. 455).

*Translated by Orsolya Frank*

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<sup>25</sup> On the history of the lengthy debate on the concepts of Central and Eastern Europe see Szűcs and Hanák 1986; Ring 1986; Gyáni 1988; Rétvári 1996; Romsics 1998. 17–31.

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